



State of Wisconsin  
Jim Doyle, Governor

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection  
Rod Nilsestuen, Secretary

Department of Natural Resources  
Matthew J. Frank, Secretary



May 11, 2010

Dear Concerned Legislator:

This letter is an update of the combined activities of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to find emerald ash borer (EAB) infestations, provide sound management recommendations and prevent artificial spread from the known infested areas as effectively and efficiently as possible.

### Status

EAB was found in Wisconsin for the first time in August 2008 in Ozaukee and Washington counties. Between June 2009 and May 2010, EAB was detected in four new counties (Figure 1). Infested trees have been found in Ozaukee, Washington, Vernon, Crawford, and Milwaukee counties. Beetles were trapped in Brown and Kenosha counties but no infested trees have been detected in these counties. EAB is now known to occur in seven counties and a total of 11 counties are under state and federal quarantines. Analysis of infested trees in Vernon, Crawford, Ozaukee, Washington and Milwaukee counties indicate EAB has been present in these areas for at least 4 years. This is a common scenario in most states as EAB is nearly impossible to detect with available tools at very low population levels. Emerald ash borer has killed over 50 million ash trees since it was first detected near Detroit, Michigan in 2002 and currently infests portions of 13 states.

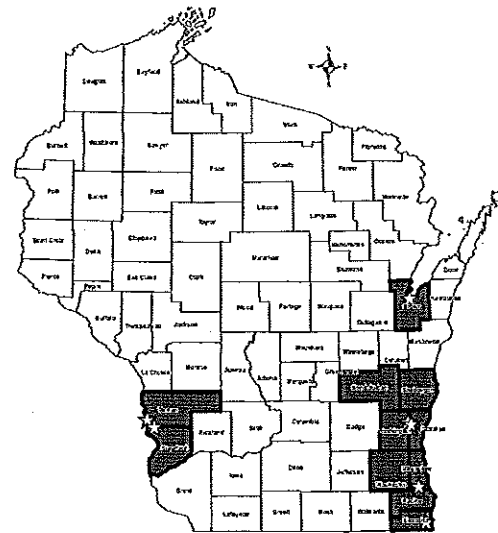


Figure 1. Wisconsin EAB Quarantine Zones  
☆ Locations of infested trees or trapped beetles.

### Survey

In 2009, DATCP continued to participate in the USDA APHIS national trapping program that began in 2008. Individual traps were set according to the national trapping grid (a 50 mile band along the general infested area), in high-risk areas, or in known infested areas (Newburg and Victory). High risk areas included the following: waysides, campgrounds, recreation properties, wood products industrial areas, landfills, areas with a high population density, second homes owned by persons residing in other EAB infested states, transportation corridors and river-ways. A total of 6,938 traps were set statewide. Seven EAB adults were captured, one each in Brown, Kenosha and Vernon counties, and two each in Crawford and Washington counties.

In addition to trapping, visual surveys were performed at EAB-infested sites in Brown, Kenosha and Milwaukee counties in August and September. Program staff worked in cooperation with municipal

personnel from Franklin, Green Bay, Kenosha and Oak Creek to identify and remove suspect ash trees for peeling to detect EAB. Infested trees were found only in the municipality of Oak Creek.

DNR and DATCP partnered to conduct aerial surveys of the Green Bay, Kenosha, Newburg and Victory sites. GPS and satellite imagery were used to mark locations of ash crown dieback for on-the-ground follow-up by survey staff. DATCP survey staff visually surveyed each of the state's infested areas between January 13 and February 25, 2010. Staff worked within a two-mile radius of each detection point marking infested trees with GPS. Trapping data combined with visual survey indicated approximately 9,500 acres in Newburg and 20,420 acres in Victory were infested. Information obtained during the survey will be utilized to develop the 2010 trapping program and shared with partners responsible for managing the ash resource in these areas.

Detection trees (open grown ash trees that are girdled) were used by DNR in a survey of state lands to detect EAB. Approximately 100 girdled ash trees in 21 state parks and forests were felled and peeled during the 2009-2010 winter to conclude the detection tree survey. Detection trees in this survey have not yielded EAB.

### **Regulatory**

The invasive species rule, NR40, passed the legislature in August, 2009. DNR and DATCP developed a memorandum of agreement, outlining agency responsibilities for implementing this rule. DNR and DATCP law enforcement, regulatory and legal staff met to discuss next steps and options for implementing NR40. The first priority is to work together to provide coordinated enforcement of DATCP's EAB quarantines. A change to the firewood rule (NR45.04) was approved by the Natural Resources Board and is currently under review in the legislature. The change decreases the distance firewood may travel (from 50 to 25 miles) if it is to be used on DNR-managed properties. This rule change should motivate additional firewood producers to get certified through DATCP's voluntary firewood certification program. The program not only addresses the threat of the movement of EAB on firewood but many other invasive species as well.

DATCP regulatory staff made 489 regulatory visits and approved 76 compliance agreements to prevent movement of infested wood out of quarantined counties. The voluntary firewood certification program completed 766 firewood inspections, certified 14 firewood vendors and seven firewood kilns. Firewood remains the focal point of the regulatory efforts, as movement of infested firewood is the number one means of artificial spread of EAB. Additional rule changes are being considered to assist the departments in addressing the threat to our agricultural and natural resources, posed by EAB and other invasive species.

### **Management**

Management of known populations focused on the Newburg infestation located in Ozaukee and Washington counties. Federal grant funds, obtained from the USDA Forest Service as well as state funds supported these efforts. Forested lands within three miles of the infestation were inventoried by DNR forestry staff. Landowners were sent the results of the inventory for their property as well as management options. DNR partnered with Town and Country Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D, a non-profit group linking natural resources with local businesses) to hire a consulting forester who will be working with landowners to conduct sustainable timber harvests.

River Edge Nature Center is located in the heart of the Newburg infestation and owns approximately 370 acres. DNR installed 15 EAB “sink” trees on the River Edge property to attract the adult beetles back into the center of the infestation. These trees were cut in February, 2010 and infested portions of the trees were destroyed; over 2,000 board feet of lumber were cut from the sink trees. This wood will be used by River Edge for construction and other special projects. Samples collected from the sink trees are currently being examined to determine the effectiveness of this management technique.

A new approach to managing multiple infestations was developed and training provided for DNR staff. This “local response unit” approach is considered to be an efficient framework for developing and implementing monitoring and management approaches to new EAB infestations.

The DNR’s urban forestry grants have been a major source of funding for EAB preparedness and response for Wisconsin communities. In 2009, 80% of the grants funded EAB projects in 33 communities and in 2010, 83% of the grants and 94% of the funding helped 51 communities prepare for EAB.

The Wisconsin Urban Ash Management Guidelines, being developed by a panel of experts from industry, the UW System and state, local and federal agencies, are nearly complete. This electronic document will provide communities with readily-updated guidance on managing the ash trees within their jurisdiction before and after EAB is detected.

### **Research**

DNR funded a research project with UW-Madison Department of Forestry to develop a statewide map of the rural forest ash resource, using satellite imagery. The project will be completed in August, 2010. This map will be used to help prioritize areas of the state to focus mitigation efforts. Funding was also provided to the University of New Hampshire to test utilizing hyperspectral imagery to detect early signs of decline in the health of ash. A final report is expected in August, 2010. The DNR is currently working with UW-Madison to develop research approaches to two issues: 1) biological control of EAB and 2) effects of EAB on the black ash ecosystem and development of mitigation strategies.

### **Outreach and Education**

DNR partnered with UW-Extension to host EAB workshops for tree care professionals in Milwaukee, LaCrosse, Menominee and Kimberly in March, 2010. DNR partnered with Town and Country RC&D to host three landowner workshops, focusing on options for forest management. These were offered in the Ozaukee/ Washington county area. Small-scale logging operations were showcased at one session. DNR and Town & Country RC& D also hosted two workshops (Madison and West Bend) for tree care professionals, focusing on urban wood utilization issues.

A statewide radio campaign designed to increase awareness of EAB and limit firewood movement began just before Memorial Day and ran through Labor Day. A cable television campaign also ran during this period, with firewood commercials airing in the Milwaukee, Green Bay, LaCrosse, Madison metro areas and surrounding countryside. Outdoor programming like “Dirty Jobs”, “Deadliest Catch”, and The Weather Channel’s “Local on the 8’s” were utilized to reach a demographic that skews toward outdoor activities such as camping, boating and fishing. Similar audiences were also

targeted with information booths at nine different trade shows. A federal grant from USDA APHIS provided support to DATCP for this work.

DNR and DATCP have also partnered to focus on local government leaders with presentations to the League of Wisconsin Municipalities Chief Executive Workshop and the annual conference of Wisconsin's chapter of the American Public Works Association.

The EAB hotline received approximately 648 calls between June 2009 and March 2010. The web portal received more than 7,000 hits and generated over 339 emails. Inquiries resulted in 103 home site visits.

### **Marketing and Utilization**

In addition to education and outreach in utilizing traditional and urban ash timber, Wisconsin agencies and industry have partnered with Illinois and Michigan to form the Urban and Community Wood Marketing Collaborative which is striving to develop "highest and best use" markets and brands for ash and other urban wood.

The continued collaborative working relationship enjoyed by DATCP and DNR is the key to maximizing the available resources in the fight against the EAB. We will continue to utilize all resources in a cost effective and efficient manner in order to minimize the damage caused by the EAB in Wisconsin. Please do not hesitate to ask if we, or any of our staff, can be of further assistance to you. For further information visit the Wisconsin EAB Portal website at:

<http://www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov//>

Respectfully,



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